

Organisation Name	Reference	2021-05-YC016
Hillingdon Carers (HC)		

Visit Date	Visited By
21 February 2023	David Loudon

Grant Summary
<p>HC was seeking a fixed-term dedicated Schools Outreach post to undertake the four proposed project elements; Young Carers in Schools programme, Volunteer Mentor scheme, Schools information pack and Schools Network group. S/he will coordinate support packages for young carers across all Carers Trust Hillingdon Services, the wider Young Carers team, with schools and families and with other agencies as appropriate.</p> <p>Schools Outreach Officer – 1FTE - £27000 plus £3000 on costs and overheads - £30000 pa for 2 years totalling £60000.</p>

Visit Details (People met, premises visited etc.)
<p>I visited Hillingdon Carers office in Uxbridge High Street and was welcomed by Sally Chandler, the CEO. Sally had arranged meetings for me with Jo Burns, Young Carers Outreach Manager, Lu Makespace, Schools Outreach Officer, (funded by Triangle Trust) both employees of HC. In addition, I met Clare Rodenas, Head of Holy Trinity Primary school (a school in the borough which receives support from HC) and Kiki Cleverly, a teenage carer.</p> <p>Both Jo and Lu were passionate about their roles. Jo started at HC in 2001 and has grown her team of 8 in response to the demand for HC services, Lu targets schools in the borough, seeking buy in from a member of the school's SLT and an operations person. With those in place she provides support to any of the young carers identified by the school. Lu and her colleague have been very successful and have had to curtail some activities because of the demand from an increasing number of schools (13 in the borough) and expansion of the service is limited by the number of staff and funding.</p> <p>There has been an ambition to create a team of Volunteers and Lu has arranged for a group of 10 volunteers from Brunel university to provide much needed support in Maths and English. They will also leave a legacy in the various schools where they volunteer.</p> <p>I heard from Clare Rodenas, the headteacher about how greatly the service is valued, in her school of 190 pupils. She has 7 children who are young carers and the support provided by Lu has been invaluable. Clare knows there are other young carers in her school but because there is still a stigma about caring for a parent/sibling, many cases cannot be supported.</p> <p>I was very impressed with Kiki, a 15 year old who has been caring for her mother who has a diagnosed personality disorder, bulimia, and OCD. There are times when Kiki needs support, Lu is on hand to encourage and its pleasing to note that Kiki has</p>

ambitions in drama and is already performing in the local theatre....without support from HC this is unlikely to have happened

Information about the Organisation

HC became a registered Charity in 1995 and supports carers across the borough of Hillingdon. Its aim is to relieve poverty, mental and physical illness and suffering amongst carers who may be as young as 5. Generally child carers are 10 -14 years old.

There is a Board of 10 Trustees who support Sally Chandler, they meet 6 times pa and on the day of my visit Sally had just returned from a Trustees Away Day. HC has a Strategic Plan for 5 years ending 2025. I was given a copy of the Plan which includes the following key objectives,

- Tackling carer loneliness
- Supporting carers to help to minimise the financial impact of caring
- Improving Carers mental and physical health
- Developing carers skills and resilience to manage all aspects of caring.

Issues and Comments

A first class team of dedicated staff and its good to see the effects of TT's grant which has clearly been put to good use.

The team could do so much more but recognise that without funding, they would 'over promise' and let down vulnerable young carers.

Other Feedback

It was pleasing to note that because of evidence HC was able to provide from the TT grant, that they secured match funding from the British and Foreign Schools Society which has paid HC for a second post working alongside Lu Makepeace, the School Outreach officer.

Although the pandemic is fading, everyone felt that mental wellbeing was still a massive issue and is likely to be so for some years ahead.

The support of The Cranfield Trust was welcomed and by way of example they had assisted Jo Burns by mentoring her on a number of staff issues as her team has expanded.